

# Padilla Bay Newsletter

A Joint Publication of the Padilla Bay Foundation and Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Autumn 2002



**Padilla Bay**

National Estuarine Research Reserve

Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is managed by the Washington State Department of Ecology under the National Estuarine Research Reserve System established by NOAA.

<http://inlet.geol.sc.edu/PDB/home.html>  
swood@padillabay.gov

10441 Bay View-Edison Road  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
(360) 428-1558



The Padilla Bay Foundation is a membership-based non-profit organization formed in 1987. Its mission is to help preserve the Padilla Bay estuary in Skagit County, Washington, through support of Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Padilla Bay Foundation  
PO Box 1305  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
(360) 757-3234

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## Interpretive Center's 20th Anniversary

On September 18, 1982, the Breazeale-Padilla Bay Interpretive Center was formally dedicated, with the smell of barbecued salmon, the sound of folk music and dancing, and the conversation of many dignitaries filling the air. Since that day, well over a million visitors have enjoyed the facilities and trails at the Center. But an incredible amount of time and effort led up to that day in 1982.

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System was established in 1972, and by 1978, the state Department of Ecology Shorelands Program, under the direction of Rod Mack, had begun the process of establishing a reserve in Washington State. Padilla Bay was chosen from a list of 26 estuaries in the state. In 1979 a steering committee of federal, state and local leaders was formed to complete the process. By December of 1980, the Padilla Bay Reserve was formally established.

Helen Engle, the governor appointee to the steering committee and National Audubon Society Board Director, remembers the complex process. "Milt Martin (project director) was exactly the right man for the job. He quietly went about getting support and endorsement from elected officials at every level, and more importantly, from property owners around the Bay. He was low key, friendly, nonthreatening, listened a lot and he was patient. He made lots of friends for the project. He was wonderful with Edna Breazeale—I think she became very fond of him.

Things went fairly smoothly, and by the time we completed the work of the committee there was consensus and good local government support. But it took lots of work getting there. Then the Washington State Legislature had to approve the project and that took some lobbying! I will never forget Edna Breazeale's testimony before the various committees and the Legislature. She was terrific!" Both Edna and Milt received the Environmentalist of the Year award from the Washington Environmental Council for their work with Padilla Bay.

Once the Reserve was established, plans for facilities were begun. The donated Breazeale Farm became the site of an interpretive center, and the farmhouse and barn provided office, laboratory and storage space for research and maintenance. For 20 years, the Breazeale Interpretive Center has been educating people about the value of estuary and coastal resources.

We'll celebrate properly when current improvements are complete. Here's to the next 20 years of education, research, and resource stewardship at Padilla Bay.



## Bill Dewey of Taylor Shellfish United is This Year's Smith/Aguero Speaker: October 12, 2002

The Smith/Aguero Trust is administered by the Padilla Bay Foundation, and sponsors a lecture or presentation on a pertinent environmental topic each year. Our guest for this occasion is Mr. Bill Dewey of Taylor Shellfish United, who will discuss oyster/clam culture and water quality issues. Prior to Mr. Dewey's presentation, the Foundation will hold its Annual Meeting, complete with music and scrumptious food. Keep a lookout in your local papers for location and times. Contact Donna at [pbf@valleyint.com](mailto:pbf@valleyint.com) or 360-757-3234 for information.



### Interested in Clean Water?

The Skagit Stream Team is once again looking for a few good folks to join volunteers across the nation in monitoring the quality of water in our streams, lakes, and estuaries. Each Team consists of 3 to 4 people who check a stream's temperature, dissolved oxygen, and depth once a month. Samples are then brought back to the Padilla Bay lab where another volunteer tests for fecal coliform and turbidity. The goal is to collect 9 months of accurate water quality data to share with interested agencies. The program provides hands-on learning about natural systems, land-use impacts, and stream/estuary health.

Orientation and training will be at the Interpretive Center on:  
**Tuesday, September 10th, from 6:00-8:30PM,**  
**Wednesday, September 11th, from 6:00-8:30PM**  
**Saturday, September 14th from 9:00AM-3:00PM**

All three training sessions are required for new stream team members. The Thursday evening session features presentations by Dr. Doug Bulthuis and Don Lennartson. On Saturday we will be training in the lab, and out in the streams.

If you have any questions or concerns call David Henry, Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve @ 428-1558, or Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District, @ 428-4313. We are looking forward to meeting all of you in September.

Note: Volunteers must be 18 years old, attend the September training, and commit one day a month to sampling.



Padilla Bay Foundation

### How you can help

Grassroots involvement is the core of Padilla Bay Foundation's commitment to protect Padilla Bay and support the Padilla Bay Reserve.

Membership in the Foundation means you are contributing directly to environmental education and research right here in Western Washington.

Categories of membership are:

Senior/Student	\$20
Individual	\$30
Family	\$40
School/Organization	\$50+
Supporting	\$60
Sustaining	\$100+
Small Business	\$100+
Sponsor	\$250
Patron	\$500
Steward	\$1000

Send your contribution to:

**Padilla Bay Foundation**  
**PO Box 1305**  
**Mount Vernon, WA 98273**  
**(360) 757-3234**  
a 501 (C) 3 organization

### Foundation Board Members

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Terry Stevens - Advisory Member  
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**Padilla Bay**

National Estuarine Research Reserve

# Autumn Events

Presentations for September, October and November

## Arctic and Resident Shorebirds in the Salish Sea: Tools to Master a Challenging Bird Group

As large numbers of shorebirds travel south from their breeding grounds, take this opportunity to gain an advanced birder's edge and master the fine points of shorebirding. Join us for a four part class in shorebird field identification and ecology that will include: vocalizations, habitat associations, foraging strategies, migration and natural history. Instructor: David Drummond, Wildlife Research Biologist/Naturalist with Nahkeeta Northwest Wildlife Services. Classroom sessions are **Wednesdays, September 4 and 11, 6:00-9:30PM**. Field studies are **Saturdays, September 7 and 14**, time to be arranged. Cost: \$100 for the series of four classes. Call (360) 766-6008 to register.

## Nature Poetry Workshop

This year's nature poetry workshop will feature Seattle poet, Emily Warn. A former Stegner Fellow at Stanford University, Emily holds degrees from Kalamazoo College and the University of Washington. She is the author of two books of poetry: *The Leaf Path* and *The Novice Insomniac*, both from Copper Canyon Press. The day will include lecture, discussion, an inspirational outdoor experience, and time to write about this place of basic elements and abundant life. Please bring writing supplies, a bag lunch or money for a deli lunch, and outdoor clothing. There is a \$15 fee for this workshop. **Saturday, September 7, 9:00 -5:00**. Limited to 20, so please call early to register.

## Sail Aboard the Sophia Christina

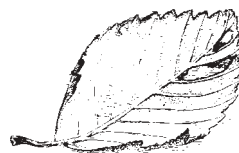
Take in the beauty of the waters around Padilla Bay while enjoying the adventure of sailing an elegant, 62' wooden schooner. Captain Jim Taylor and a Padilla Bay naturalist will lead this excursion into one of the most productive ecosystems on earth. **Saturday, September 28**. Two departures at 9:00 and 1:00 from Cap Sante Marina in



Anacortes. Cost is \$40. Call the interpretive center soon to register, as this trip is sure to fill up. Bring a snack and warm, layered clothing.

## Washington Native Plants

As days shorten, temperatures drop, and rains return, we can watch the seasonal changes in plant communities. We are fortunate to live in the Evergreen State where we don't always need to rely on leafless twigs to identify plants. Join members of the local Salal Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society for a slide presentation on Washington Native Plants. This is the first in a series of three seasonal programs. Watch for followup programs this winter and spring. **Saturday, October 26, 1:00-2:30**. Please call to register.



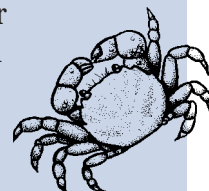
## Searching for Birds of the Fall Migration

Fall brings in a new cast of birds to Padilla Bay and the surrounding agricultural flats. Birders of any skill level, come join naturalist Libby Mills for a day in the field listening to fall voices and looking for fall migrants. This is a good time of year to see waterfowl and raptors. Bring binoculars, field guide, snack or lunch, and warm thermos and clothing for chilly, wet weather. Come prepared to carpool. Call the Interpretive Center to register. **Friday, November 15 or Saturday, November 16, 9:00-1:00**.

The Breazeale Interpretive Center is open  
**Wednesday-Sunday, 10:00-5:00.**

**Closed November 28 & 29**

To register for programs or for more information, call the Interpretive Center at  
**(360) 428-1558.**



## Backyard Composting Workshop

Turn those piles of weeds, clippings and apple peels into rich, black soil. Skagit County Master Composters will teach you what goes into a compost pile, show you different bin systems, and give you tips on how to use the finished compost in your yard. For more information, call Frances Ambrose (360) 336-9400. No registration required. The workshop will take place at the Composting Demonstration Site behind the barn at the Interpretive Center. **Friday, September 6 and Friday, September 27 from 1:00-2:30.**

## Puget Sound Kids Day

This is the highlight of the year for kids at Padilla Bay. Come celebrate our great Puget Sound! Kids Day is sponsored by Kids for Puget Sound, an organization of thousands of kids working to help take care of Puget Sound. We'll sing, eat, share stories, see a film, and smile for the annual group photo. Bring a t-shirt to decorate and bring all your friends. **Saturday, October 5, 1:00-3:30.** All ages welcome!



## Kayaking in Padilla Bay

The air is crisp, marine birds are returning, and the water beckons. Enjoy a day of paddling on Padilla and Fidalgo Bay. An Island Outfitters guide and a Padilla Bay naturalist will lead these trips. No experience necessary, just come with a lunch, water bottle, and warm clothing (rain gear, non-cotton layers, hat). Minimum age is 12, with people under 18 accompanied by a parent. Participants meet at 10:30 at Island Outfitters on 24th & Commercial, Anacortes. Fee is \$55 per person for a 5 hour trip. **Call Island Outfitters at 299-2300 to register. September 7, October 12, October 26, November 2, and November 16.**

## Films and Videos:

### Sundays at 1:00 & 4:00

September	1	The Days of Salmon Traps (30 min)
	8	Search for the Giant Squid (60 min)
	15	Aquatic Invasive Species (23 min)
	22	Yellowlegs, Eelgrass, Tideflats (60 m)
	29	The Days of Salmon Traps (30 min)
October	6	Reviving the Sound (56 min)
	13	When the Salmon Runs Dry (60 m)
	20	The World Between the Tides (22 m)
	27	The Challenge on the Coast (58m)
November	3	Spirit of the Sound (60 min)
	10	Alien Ocean (30 m)
	17	Fabulous Wetlands (7 min)
	24	Estuary! (15 min)

## Monthly Youth Programs Offer Fun Learning

**Mini Explorers** are the 3-5 year old learners. We look at a new topic each month, with stories, games, hands-on observations, art projects, and plenty of action. Call no more than 2 weeks ahead to register.

September 4 & 5, 10:00 & 1:00

Algae- *Seaweeds aren't really weeds. Come learn about these great plants in Padilla Bay.*

October 9 & 10, 10:00 & 1:00

Apple cider - *Turn the crank and squeeze the juice while we hear about the people who planted the orchard long ago. Don't forget warm clothes.*

November 6 & 7, 10:00 & 1:00

Estuary!- *Padilla Bay is a cool place where fresh water meets the sea.*



**Junior Ecologists** are 6-9 year olds who have fun exploring the estuary. Excursions to the beach, science experiments, games, art projects, and studying life in the bay -- this program is guaranteed fun! Call the Interpretive Center to register.

September 13 & 14, 1:00-2:30

Marine Mammals - *Have fun learning about our nearest relatives in the sea.*

October 11 & 12, 1:00-2:30

Apple cider- *Turn the crank and squeeze the juice while we hear about the people who planted the orchard long ago. Don't forget warm clothes.*

November 8 & 9, 1:00-2:30

Tides - *Here's the force that empties Padilla Bay each day. Learn what makes it go and what it means for plants and animals in the bay.*





### Investigating the Purple Varnish Clam

Jessica Barkas recently completed a study looking at the effects of a non-native clam on two established clam species in northern Puget Sound. Jessica performed her research while completing a Master of Science degree at Western Washington University. She received a Padilla Bay Research Assistantship to help fund her study. The Assistantship was funded by Tesoro Northwest Oil Company through the Padilla Bay Foundation.

The purple varnish clam (*Nuttallia obscurata*), native to China, Japan and

Korea is a recent arrival in Puget Sound and the Strait of Georgia. It was first reported in English Bay, near Vancouver, B.C. in 1991 and is thought to have been introduced accidentally via the dumping of a ship's ballast water. It now inhabits estuaries from the north end of the Strait of Georgia to the mouth of Hood Canal and parts of the Oregon coast. Little is known about its effect on native estuarine communities, particularly other bivalves.

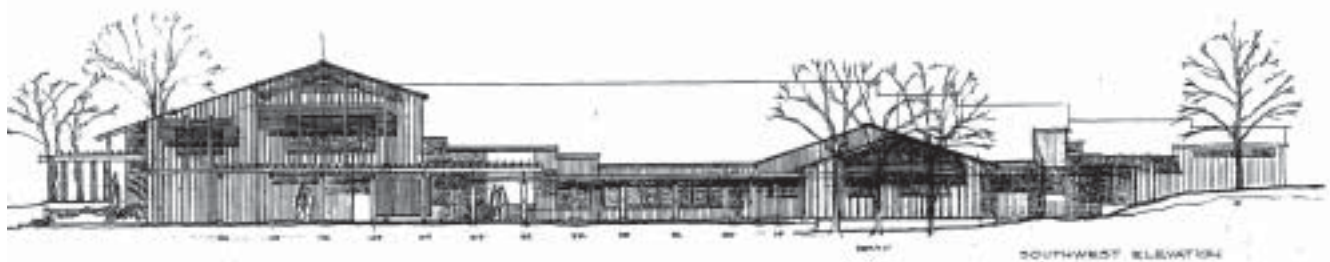
### Estuary Live for Schools

Teachers—here's a new Internet program that brings the estuary into your classroom. Celebrate National Estuaries Day September 28 by taking a virtual field trip to 8 estuaries around the country— including Padilla Bay. As estuaries are toured on line, students can ask questions over the Internet. They are answered live by scientists in the field. Call the reserve for more information, or check the Estuary Live web site at [www.estuaries.gov](http://www.estuaries.gov).

In order to help determine what impact the purple varnish clam has on the native environment, Jessica performed a two-part study including a distribution survey of the purple varnish clam and a competition experiment with two other clams. For the distribution survey Jessica sampled several beaches throughout Puget Sound to find out if purple varnish clams live there and if so, how many. For the competition experiment, Jessica combined different numbers of purple varnish clams and either our native littleneck clam or the non-native but well-established and economically important manila clam. She placed them in small cages and buried them in Fidalgo and Chuckanut Bays. She monitored the cages for number of clams and shell size.



Of the thirty-one beaches sampled, Jessica found purple varnish clams at nine of them, including Bayview State Park and Samish Island (both Padilla Bay locations). Unfortunately, many of her competition experiment clams were lost to predation, possibly by crabs. Jessica hopes that her findings will be valuable to the future of nearshore management, particularly in the area of ballast water treatment.



### Facility Expansion Underway

Plans for expansion of the Interpretive Center include a multi-purpose room (left) where the existing rest rooms are located, as well as expanded office space. A new laboratory building will be built between the Breazeale House and the barn. Excavation is underway, so you can expect things to look a little disheveled this fall and through the coming year. Pardon the mess, but come and visit us anyway!

### Here is Your Chance to Multiply Your Dollars

Every dollar donated to the Padilla Bay Foundation during the coming year will be used as match for a federal grant for the Reserve's new facility project. A \$40 donation will mean \$132 for educational and laboratory equipment for the new facilities. The Foundation has recently received generous donations from the Shell Refining Company, General Chemical Company, and Puget Sound Energy, as well as many gifts from school groups and visitors. All these donations will be matched by a NOAA construction grant.

### Speakers Bureau

Members of the Padilla Bay Foundation and Padilla Bay Reserve Staff are happy to make presentations at your club meetings or special occasions. Call the Foundation at 360-757-3234 to schedule.

### Check Inside for the Autumn Activity Schedule:

- Presentations
- Mini Explorers
- Junior Ecologists
- Films
- Kayaking

*Padilla Bay*



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